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INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE  
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RUCNNSG/NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9969  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 3075  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 3093  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5978  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2340  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 3737  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 8042  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 6419  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2681  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 1207  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 0930  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 1928  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 2028  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 0167  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 2713  
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 0452  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8780  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0914  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 000659

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/18/2015  
TAGS: [MNUC](#) [PREL](#) [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [IR](#) [IN](#)  
SUBJECT: FS SARAN DISMISSES ANONYMOUS PRESS CLAIMS THAT  
INDIA WILL ABSTAIN ON IRAN IAEA VOTE

REF: NEW DELHI 614

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Classified By: Ambassador Mulford for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

Will India Abstain?  
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1. (C) Foreign Secretary Saran dismissed anonymously-sourced press reports that India would abstain in the upcoming February 2 IAEA BOG vote on Iran (other topics reported septel) when he met the Ambassador on January 30. Saran showed surprise when the Ambassador described the Reuters report in which an unnamed senior GOI official alleged India would abstain. Referring to the Ambassador's highly-publicized comments about the Iran vote's possible implications for Congressional action on the US-India civilian nuclear energy agreement (reftel), the anonymous official is quoted to have said: "We cannot vote with the US after (the Ambassador's) comments. We're planning to abstain." The official also said: "We are still hoping the crisis won't go to a vote and Iran will get some more time to resolve it through talks, but if it does, then Ambassador Mulford has made it easy for us."

A Fine Report -- If it Were Accurate  
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12. (C) Saran, who was visibly surprised by the Ambassador's recounting of the press reports, declared that there was "absolutely no basis" for suggestions that India had decided to abstain. Expressing the hope that India's friends in the USG would appreciate his ministry's professionalism, the Foreign Secretary underlined that it would be ludicrous of India to adopt such a position before New Delhi knew what it was being asked to vote upon. Saran acknowledged that he could not rule out someone in the GOI floating personal political opinions. "But as far as this ministry is concerned," there are no decisions. Concluding, the Foreign Secretary enthusiastically welcomed the offer of a January 31

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phone call from U/S Burns to readout on the London meeting, and indicated that he would have no objection to the Secretary also reaching out to Prime Minister Singh in his

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capacity as acting Foreign Minister (a title reaffirmed in the January 29 cabinet shuffle).

A Word From the New Guy

13. (C) The anonymous official's statements were balanced by hints at India's undecided IAEA BOG position made by India's new Petroleum Minister, Murli Deora, whom wire services quoted as saying "The upcoming IAEA vote affects the petroleum ministry more than any other ministry as it has a direct impact on energy security of the country." Numerous sources have told us (reported septel) that Deora replaced the previous Energy minister, Mani Shankar Aiyar, because Aiyar had pushed a foreign policy independent of the MEA and the Iran-India pipeline too vigorously, among other reasons.

COMMENT: Don't Read Too Much Into Anonymous Grumbling

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14. (C) There are legions of dinosaurs left in the Indian bureaucracy who leak poison regularly to try to disrupt the encouraging pace of US-India relations. There is a lot of blood on the table from January 29's cabinet reshuffle, and the old guard are extremely grumpy at the strong pro-US shift in the cabinet. The leak that India will abstain in Vienna was greeted with surprise and derision by FS Saran, a man in the inner circle. We cannot rule out that the leak is part of a rearguard action fought by disgruntled communists, socialists, NAM-afficionados, and their ilk to take India back to its autarkic, moralistic, impoverished, and unrealistic past. As PM Singh has said again and again, India will make decisions on Iran that are in its best national interest. FS Saran has told us clearly that a nuclear Iran is not in India's national interest. We are confident that the GOI is still undecided about its IAEA BOG vote on February 2, anonymous leaks notwithstanding. END COMMENT.  
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